

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/076,485
Amendment dated December 9, 2003
Reply to OA of September 10, 2003

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-8, 13-16 and 19 have been amended in order to more particularly point out, and distinctly claim the subject matter to which the applicants regard as their invention. The applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added. It is believed that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated September 10, 2003.

Objection to the Abstract

The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because of undue length.

As to the Examiner's outstanding objection to the Abstract of the Disclosure, as indicated above, the applicants have deleted the current Abstract, and submit herewith a substitute Abstract of the Disclosure in place therefor.

The Applicants respectfully request that the substitute Abstract of the Disclosure submitted herewith be approved by the Examiner.

Objection to the Specification

The specification has been objected to due to certain informalities, which the Examiner deemed needed correction, as set forth in item 1, page 1 of the outstanding Office Action.

Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to the specification obviates the objection to the specification. No new matter is added to the substitute specification. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully solicited.

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Claim Rejections under 35 USC §112

Claims 1-19 are rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Specifically, in claims 1 and 15 the Examiner is objecting to the term “snug fit hole”. In order to overcome this rejection the term “snug fit hole” has been changed to simply “fit hole” in claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15, 16, and 19.

Further, the Examiner is objecting to the term “snugly fitted” in claim 14. The phrase “snugly fitted” has been changed to “fitted” in claim 14.

Still further the Examiner is objecting to the phrase “a free portion is formed between right and left cuts” in claim 13. This feature is described on page 29, lines 18-24 of the specification. Claim 13 has been amended to indicate that there are two cuts at opposite ends of a lower end of the lower plate portion of the plate terminal.

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1-19 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC §102

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Sato et al. (JP 9-213302).

The present invention is a terminal structure for a storage battery. The terminal structure

has a plate terminal (1) that includes one end plate portion (1a) connected to an electrode pole (H) of the storage battery, and a led-out plate portion (1b) led out from the electrode pole (H) to a notch (D) of a cover (C). The led-out plate portion (1b) is formed into a horizontal plate portion (1b1) and a vertical plate portion (1b2) vertically bent downwards into an L-shape and having a bolt insertion hole 4. The plate terminal (1) is mounted on a cover face (d1) by the vertical plate portion (1b2) in which a lower plate portion (6) of the vertical plate portion (1b2) is provided with engagement portions (7, 7) and is pressed into a fit hole (8) provided in the cover (C). The engagement portions (7, 7) engage with opposing inner wall faces (8a, 8b) using teeth at both side edges of a lower plate portion (6) of the vertical plate portion (1b2).

Sato et al. describes a terminal structure (4) having two bolt holes (42a and 43a). As shown in figure 1, 2 5 and 6 a tip (44) of the terminal (4) is inserted into groove (71a) to secure the structure.

It should be noted that Sato et al. is the same reference cited as prior art in the Description of Related Art on pages 1-4 of the specification and the drawbacks of Sato et al. are clearly described on page 4, lines 8-14 of the specification and it is further described on page 4 of the specification that the purpose of the present invention is to eliminate the drawbacks of the prior art.

Sato et al. describes that the tip 44 of the lower plate portion of the vertical plate portion of the terminal 4 is bent to the horizontal direction and horizontally bent tip 44 is fitted in the groove 71a made in the side wall of the projection 7 raised from the cover of the storage battery,

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while the present invention has such a characteristic featured construction that the tip of the lower plate portion is not bent and is straight so as to direct downwards and is pressed into the hole made in the horizontal surface of the cover of the storage battery.

Claim 1 has been amended to indicate that the engagement portions (7, 7) engage with opposing inner wall faces (8a, 8b) using teeth at both side edges of a lower plate portion (6) of the vertical plate portion (1b2). Sato et al. fails to describe this feature. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1 and 2 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Sato et al. (JP 9-213302) is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC §103b

Claims 12 and 19 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sato et al. (JP 9-213302).

Claims 12 and 19 are allowable by virtue of the their dependence from and allowable independent claim. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 12 and 19 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sato et al. (JP 9-213302) is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that claims 3-11 and 16-18 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, and to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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Claims 3 and 16 are amended to incorporate all the limitations of claim 1 therein. This places claims 3 and 16 in independent form. Therefore, allowance of claims 3-11 and 16-18 is respectfully requested.

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Conclusion

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, claims 1, 3, 4, 6-8, 13-16 and 19, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,
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